

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Government do not say that it will not be worthy. A more accurate answer will be to say that the question will be decided finally after the report is received. Therefore that answer is given.

Salt Contract.

311. Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—Will the Government be pleased to state—

- (a) the price the Government have agreed to pay to the present contractor for supply of salt;
- (b) for how many years is the present contract to run;
- (c) what was the rate agreed to by the Government with the previous contractor (lower or higher than the present rate);
- (d) will the difference result in loss or gain to the Government if the selling price is left as it was before;
- (e) have the Government any intention to vary the selling price?

Mr. M. P. Cherian.—(a) The salt purchased is of two kinds, called Jada and barras. The prices in 1109 and 1110 are Rs. 63 per 100 mds. of Jada and Rs. 62 per 100 mds. of barras.

(b) During the years 1109 and 1110.

(c) Rs. 58—4—0 per 100 mds. of Jada and

Rs. 56—4—0 do Barras.

They were lower than the present rate.

(d) The cost price of salt in the previous year was Re. 0—9—2 per maund, while this year it is Re. 0—10—0 per maund. Salt was sold at the rate of Rs. 2—5—0 per maund including duty and other charges in 1108. In this year also, salt is sold at the same rate. Deducting duty and cost price, the Government was getting a margin of Re. 0—2—10 in 1108 towards incidental charges. This year, the receipt under this head is only Re. 0—2—0 per maund. The Government therefore has had to forgo ten pias on every maund of salt sold. Granting that the quantity of salt sold in 1109 will not be less than that of 1108, the shortage in revenue thus caused comes to about Rs. 15,000—0—0.

(e) No. Considering the present economic depression the Government did not think it advisable to raise the selling price of salt.

Mr. P. Krishna Menon.—So in the matter of salt revenue the Government is forgoing the amount of Rs. 15,000 in the interest of the people?

Mr. M. P. Cherian.—Yes.

Duty on indigenous Sugar.

312. Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Will the Government be pleased to state whether their attention has been